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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 48th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 1 March 1994, at 7 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. van WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands)

later: Mr. URRUTIA (Peru)

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The meeting was called to order at 7.15 p.m.

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION:

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(agenda item 11) (continued) (E/CN.4/1994/34-38, 39 and Corr.1, 40-42, 43 and Add.1, 44 and Add.1, 45 and 74; E/CN.4/1994/NGO/2-4 and 38; A/48/579)

ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS (agenda item 19) (continued) (E/CN.4/1994/73/Add.1, 75, 76 and Add.1, 77 and Add.1, 78 and Add.1, and 109; A/CONF.157/23)

1. Mr. AREVALO DE LEON (Observer for Guatemala), speaking on agenda item 19, said that Guatemala asked the Commission to support its efforts to continue the process of political, social and economic transformation needed to replace the structures bequeathed by authoritarian regimes. An optimistic review of the direction that process was taking was justified by the facts: when, less than a year previously, the then President, Jorge Serrano Elías, had tried to dissolve the National Congress and the Supreme Court of Justice and to rule by decree, Guatemalan society as a whole had come to the aid of the democratic institutions. Without recourse to violence and in strict compliance with constitutional provisions, political parties, trade unions, the public and entrepreneurs had joined the international community in rejecting the coup, sparking off a process that had ended in the election of a new constitutional President, Ramiro de León Carpio, who, by virtue of his former office of Human Rights Procurator, embodied the political aspirations of Guatemalan society. In so doing, they had revealed, not only their determination to avoid a reversal of the changes, but also their ability to use the key resource for the country's democratic future: the rule of law.

2. As former Human Rights Procurator, the new President was aware that promotion of full enjoyment of all human rights was the concrete expression of Guatemala's institutional transformation. He had embarked on implementation of a programme of measures that incorporated the recommendations made by the previous Independent Expert, Mr. Tomuschat. Those measures included: (a) the drafting of a national human rights plan to provide the Executive with guidelines, coordination of which was the responsibility of the Presidential Commission for Coordinating Executive Policy in the Field of Human Rights (COPREDEH); (b) a relaxation of the procedures for approval and recognition

of the artificial personality of non-profit-making organizations; (c) the restructuring of the Presidential Generals Staff and the abolition of the security department known as the Archivo; (d) the creation of a commission to study proposals to set up a State intelligence service, attached to the Office of the President of the Republic and independent of the military intelligence services - a measure to be implemented during 1994; (e) a commitment not to set up new civilian self-defence patrols (PACs) in areas where their existence was not justified, and to entrust the Office of the Human Rights Procurator with verification of the voluntary nature of membership; (f) the appointment of civilians with expertise in human rights matters to senior posts in the National Police, the creation of special sections to investigate reports of violations, submission to the Congress of the Republic of a bill organizing the National Police, together with the drafting of plans to increase its professionalism and technical capacities; (g) submission to Congress of a bill on military and social service; and (h) establishment of an Indigenous Fund to meet the needs of the indigenous communities, as defined by themselves.

3. In addition to those specific measures, others were being taken in the context of the Government's general efforts to promote a substantial improvement in living standards. Unfortunately, thanks to the inadequacy of the policies applied during most of the nation's history, Guatemalan society faced enormous socio-economic problems. The efforts made by the Government were reflected in the results of the 180-day plan applied in the latter half of 1993, and in the five areas it had singled out for attention in 1994 and 1995: consolidation of democracy and the rule of law; the fight against poverty; transformation of the production system; conservation of the environment; and modernization of institutions. Specific programmes existed in each of those areas, intended not merely to alleviate existing shortcomings, but to lay the foundations for an irreversible long-term process in which the interaction between the Government and the various sectors of the country would be redefined.

4. The task of building a political, economic and social democracy on the ruins of an authoritarian system that had perverted each and every institution was not an easy one for a nation with limited resources. However, all Guatemalans possessed the determination to address the task of overcoming the obstacles to their development, and the Government had harnessed that determination, through efforts to renew dialogue with the Unión Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG), with a view to putting an end to the 30-year-long conflict. The new framework for negotiations agreed upon in Mexico City in January 1994 contained mechanisms which should avoid a recurrence of the deadlock in which the previous round of negotiations had ended. In that regard, it was to be noted that a representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations would attend the talks as a mediator; and that representatives of Colombia, Mexico, Norway, Spain, the United States of America and Venezuela would attend the negotiations as observers. The presence of the international community in the negotiations would enable the parties to demonstrate their willingness to negotiate a non-violent solution to the conflict. In the first instance, the Government had agreed to take up the issues of the human rights agreement and the international verification of compliance therewith. In addition to those negotiations, the Government would continue to apply a number of measures to promote and protect human rights,

and in particular, would seek to put an end to impunity. It was to be hoped that, in its turn, URNG would demonstrate its constructive attitude by abandoning terrorism and violence as a means of achieving its political objectives.

5. The Government of Guatemala had not come before the Commission on Human Rights with the intention of concealing or denying its shortcomings in the area of human rights. Guatemalans acknowledged that recognition of those failures was a necessary part of the process of achieving a solution. It was no coincidence that, in a moment of crisis, they had elected the Human Rights Procurator to the presidency. However, it was to be hoped that their successes, as well as their failures, would be recognized. Those successes included the continuation of the return of Guatemalan refugees from Mexico, more than a thousand of whom had returned to their communities of origin in January 1994 alone; the fact that since August 1993 there had not been a single report of violations of the rights of street children by the security forces; the decision by Communities in Resistance (CPRs) to resume participation in public life; and the registration of new trade unions in recent months as a result of the relaxation of procedures for their legalization. Those were just a few examples of the transformation that Guatemalan society was undergoing and that the Government, with a mandate from its people, was encouraging. The Commission and the Independent Expert could rest assured that the Government would study their recommendations and would spare no efforts to further their implementation. It was, first and foremost, in the Government's own interest to transform the adverse circumstances still affecting millions of its citizens. However, provision of advisory services to the Government should not be limited to the functions of the Independent Expert, but should extend to provision of technical and financial assistance in all areas in which shortcomings persisted. He called upon the international community to give tangible form to its concern regarding the situation in Guatemala by providing real assistance to support the efforts made by the people of Guatemala in that regard.

6. Mr. HAGROO (International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations), speaking on agenda item 11 (d), said that there were many situations around the globe in which conflicts or disputes were used as a pretext for the suspension of fundamental rights. There were also situations in which the denial of human rights and freedoms created or aggravated conflicts and disputes. In the latter case as well as the former, conflict merely heightened the suppression of freedoms. Yet increased repression only increased human resistance to force, as the quest for survival gathered pace. The situation of Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina provided the most glaring example of a people battling to ensure their most fundamental freedom - their very survival.

7. Elsewhere, in Kashmir, populations were undergoing mass exoduses and displacement as the result of their fundamental struggle to achieve self-determination. In 1947, on the eve of the partition of India, the predominantly Muslim Kashmir valley had been unaffected by the rioting sweeping the sub-continent, while the Muslim minority in the neighbouring region of Jammu had, with assistance from the State forces, been butchered or driven to seek refuge in Pakistan.

8. Mr. CHAKRAVARTI (India), speaking on a point of order, said that the speaker was departing from the agenda item under discussion.

9. The CHAIRMAN requested the speaker to confine his remarks to the agenda item.

10. Mr. HAGROO (International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations) said that in 1965, half a million people had been driven across the cease-fire line for daring to differ with the views of the ruling Indian coterie. Fifty thousand people had been arrested and detained in inhuman conditions. The process of deportation had been repeated in 1971, and also in 1989-1990, on which occasion Muslims had attempted to halt the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus.

11. Basic human rights could not be re-established in Kashmir without the attention of the international community. Intolerance and the denial of values sparked off conflicts that quickly escalated.

12. The CHAIRMAN ruled the speaker out of order.

13. Ms. ESCORCIA (Commission for the Defence of Human Rights in Central America - CODEHUCA) said that in order to carry out his mandate, of reporting on human rights developments in El Salvador, the Independent Expert needed to count on the cooperation of the Government of El Salvador, as provided for in Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter of the United Nations. That obligation of cooperation had been breached by the Government of El Salvador when it had prevented the Independent Expert from entering its territory, as described in the introductory paragraphs of his report (E/CN.4/1994/11). The Commission must roundly condemn that action on the part of the Salvadorian Government. The refusal to allow the Independent Expert entry was not an isolated incident, but formed part of a consistent pattern, the Government having also denied entry to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. It was clear that, aware of the implications of paragraph 10 of Commission resolution 1993/93, the Government was deliberately attempting to prevent the Independent Expert from preparing his report.

14. The "substantial improvement" referred to in that paragraph had not been forthcoming. On the contrary, according to paragraph 102 of the most recent report by the Human Rights Division of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), the situation had actually deteriorated by October 1993. That deterioration was associated with the renewed activity of the death squads, and with the Government's failure to implement the recommendation of the Commission on the Truth that the death squads should be investigated and disbanded forthwith.

15. It was thus absurd to seek to recall the Independent Expert from El Salvador, at a time when it had been necessary for the Secretary-General to promote the creation of additional mechanisms for investigation, such as the Joint Group for the Investigation of Illegal Armed Groups. Implementation of the Peace Agreements, the indispensable prerequisite for the enjoyment of human rights, remained fragile and incomplete. The presidential candidates had undertaken to comply with the Peace Agreements and it was thus necessary for the Commission to maintain its vigilance through the independent expert,

and to monitor compliance with the recommendations to be made by the Joint Group in June 1994. The least the Commission could do was to support the work of its experts, thereby strengthening its own methods of work.

16. Mr. Urrutia (Peru) took the Chair.

17. Ms. SPALDING (Commission for the Defence of Human Rights in Central America - CODEHUCA) said that one of the main conclusions of the report of the new Independent Expert on Guatemala (E/CN.4/1994/10, para. 173) was that phenomena internationally considered to be grave violations of human rights continued to occur in Guatemala, and that adequate legal and political measures had not yet been taken in that regard. That conclusion was consistent with observations contained in other recent reports by United Nations officials, on the basis of which the Commission should have decided, during its discussion of agenda item 3, to treat the case of Guatemala under agenda item 12 at its current session. Yet, notwithstanding the conclusions reached by the Independent Expert and the careful wording of resolution 1993/88, the Commission again found itself in the unfortunate position of having to discuss Guatemala under agenda item 19.

18. Notwithstanding that caveat, the Copenhagen Initiative for Central America, an association of European non-governmental organizations present at the invitation of CODEHUCA, welcomed the report of the Independent Expert, which clearly identified the institutions which should be eliminated or reformed, rather than merely renamed, if human rights were to enjoy de facto as well as de jure protection. Her organization recognized that important changes had taken place in Guatemala in recent years, and that the new President had committed his Government to improving the human rights situation. Yet it was struck by the Independent Expert's observation that the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman had received 1,552 claims of serious human rights violations in 1992, while by the end of November 1993 it had already received 1,488 such claims. Numbers alone could not do justice to the horrors entailed in gross human rights violations. The grim reality behind those figures was that there had been an increase in death threats, kidnappings, criminal acts attributed to the civilian self-defence patrols (PACs) and violations of the right to private property. Claims of violations of economic, social and cultural rights had also increased. Similar observations had also been made by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, by the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture, and by the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions.

19. Her organization did not deny that positive steps had been taken by both the current and previous Guatemalan Governments. Yet the institutional roots of grave human rights violations, and of impunity, stubbornly endured. The Independent Expert had singled out the pervasive militarization of the country and the ineffectiveness of the judicial system as major obstacles to respect for human rights and the clarification of the truth. The question now facing the Commission was not whether human rights were violated in Guatemala, but rather, how it could best help the Government and people of Guatemala to put an end to their tragic history of abuse, exile, loss and suffering. The Commission should not diminish its support for genuine changes in the human rights situation in Guatemala. If it chose not to respect fully either the

letter or the spirit of its resolution 1993/88, she hoped that it would at least renew the mandate of the Independent Expert, express its grave concern at the persistent human rights violations highlighted in the Expert's report, and lament the failure to comply with recommendations made by the previous Independent Expert. Finally, by including a clause akin to that contained in resolution 1993/88 and keeping Guatemala under item 3, the Commission could help stop the erosion of the advisory services mechanism, while building in incentives for compliance with its new resolution.

20. Ms. MEDRANO (International Indian Treaty Council) said that many non-governmental organizations, members of the Commission and observers shared the view that agenda item 19 was not an appropriate context for the discussion of situations of countries in which there were persistent violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, situations which should properly be discussed under agenda item 12. Guatemala had been receiving advisory services since 1987, despite which, violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms persisted. The Maya majority were those most affected by that situation. Not only were they the victims of military repression by the State, but they had also been denied their right to economic, political, social and cultural development as a result of the de facto racial discrimination that prevailed in Guatemala.

21. Her organization saluted the achievement of the Independent Expert in producing a report on the human rights situation in Guatemala in such a short time. It had also read the various reports referring to Guatemala submitted to the Commission, from which it was clear that at no point had there been an improvement in the human rights situation. On the contrary, there had been a very significant deterioration during 1993, as was confirmed by the report of the Department of State of the United States of America, as well as by domestic reports.

22. While it was true that Guatemala had had three civilian Governments since 1986, it was also true that the army had never relinquished real power. In her organization's view, it was the ubiquitous presence of the army, to which the Independent Expert several times drew attention in her report, which had vitiated the advisory services. The recommendations made by the various experts and special rapporteurs over the seven years of provision of advisory services had gone unheeded by the Government, a reflection of its lack of will to change the repressive policies of the State. The persistence of impunity further suggested that the perpetrators of violations enjoyed the protection of the authorities. For that reason, it had been inappropriate to consider the case of Guatemala under agenda item 19. The only way of ensuring that 9 million Guatemalans would be able to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms was to consider the case of Guatemala under agenda item 12.

23. Mr. LAMEMAN (Survival International), speaking on behalf of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations in Western Canada, said that while 1993, designated by the United Nations as the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples, had fallen far short of expectations in terms of the support received from countries and non-governmental organizations, it had served as a valuable lesson and gave hope for the international decade of the world's indigenous peoples due to start on 10 December 1994.

24. He recommended that adequate funds should be allocated to support programmes and initiatives to promote the international decade. Given the lack of commitment to the International Year, the funds for the international decade should at least equal, if not exceed, funds allocated to other international decades. Governments should also be encouraged to commit and allocate a meaningful proportion of funds from their national budgets. Those funds should be made available to indigenous peoples so that projects could be initiated at the community level to promote the decade. A unit should also be established and funded for the purpose of planning programmes and initiatives, half of whose members should be indigenous persons, the rest being recruited from the United Nations and its specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and observer Governments. Similar units could be established at national level.

25. In the context of alternative approaches, he recommended that a permanent forum for indigenous peoples should be set up within the United Nations system (a United Nations council of indigenous peoples) as one of the programmes of the international decade and in conjunction with the ongoing work of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples, which could discuss the composition, organization and activities of such a council.

26. Another worthwhile project was the study of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous peoples being carried out by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Miguel Alfonso Martínez. It was, however, very inadequately funded and he urged the United Nations to increase its resources. The Confederacy also favoured the creation of a central registry of indigenous treaties and recommended the holding of a United Nations Conference on Indigenous Treaties, which would greatly assist the work of the Special Rapporteur.

27. He reiterated the Confederacy's concern with regard to the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples in its present form. Indigenous peoples' organizations would apparently be able only to comment on that draft but not propose any changes at the twelfth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Peoples in July 1994. It would be difficult for such organizations after 12 years of hard work to endorse a watered-down declaration that in the long run would be detrimental to indigenous peoples and beneficial to nation States, the very problem the whole process was intended to address. He appealed to the United Nations to allow indigenous peoples full and meaningful participation at every level at which the draft declaration would be discussed.

28. Mr. WEERAKOON (Sri Lanka) said that the reports by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Deng, on internally displaced persons and on the situation in Sri Lanka (E/CN.4/1994/44 and Add.1), were generally appreciative of the efforts Sri Lanka was making to assist its displaced and returnee population and to provide relief aid to persons under the virtual control of a militant group.

29. The ongoing conflict in the north and east of Sri Lanka had created a large internally displaced population numbering around 600 thousand persons. Close coordination and cooperation between government ministries, local government authorities, international agencies and non-governmental

organizations ensured the massive humanitarian effort involved including the supply of food and medical supplies and the provision of medical care, housing and education facilities. The financial burden of US$ 5 million per month was borne by the Government. Sri Lanka agreed with the specific recommendations made by the Special Representative and with the need to improve and build on the existing relief and rehabilitation programme. The quality of relief at present provided could be enhanced with greater international donor assistance.

30. With regard to resettlement programmes, the guidelines issued by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Social Welfare made clear that the Government was committed to the principle that resettlement should be on a voluntary basis only as far as both internally displaced persons and returning refugees from Europe were concerned.

31. While the Sri Lankan Government was in overall agreement with several of the recommendations relating to protection and assistance to the internally displaced, it felt that certain parts of the report appeared to have extended beyond the scope of the Special Representative's mandate. While a detailed response to the report would be forwarded to the Special Pepresentative in due course, he would point out that there were some inaccuracies in the sections of the report dealing with a historical survey of the events leading to the present situation, the root causes of the conflict and the continuing search for a durable political solution. Although it was true that only the elimination of the root causes could lead to a just and durable solution of a conflict, specific recommendations regarding conflict resolution were clearly beyond the mandate of the Special Representative. Furthermore, in the section relating to the role of the donor community, the conditionality of donor assistance was touched on - a controversial issue far removed from the subject of the care of the internally displaced.

32. With regard to the ongoing debate on internally displaced persons in general, one problem was the lack of a functional definition of internal displacement, since in conflicts both displaced and non-displaced groups might be affected in similar ways and require the same sort of special assistance. In addition, there was a need for appropriate mechanisms to assist coordination and cooperation between governments, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. Lastly, it should be borne in mind that displacement was frequently caused by the violent acts of terrorist groups; States could therefore not be held solely accountable for such acts and their consequences.

33. The Government of Sri Lanka, welcoming a most constructive report, said it would continue to cooperate with the Special Representative in the future in its continuing efforts to protect and assist the internally displaced.

34. Mr. PORTALES (Chile) welcomed the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights and in particular appreciated the appointment of a distinguished Latin American diplomat, Mr. José Ayala Lasso of Ecuador, to the post in view of the interest the Latin American and Caribbean region had long shown in the creation of such a post and its signal role in its adoption.

35. It was unfortunate that the media and hence world public opinion had not given due attention to what was perhaps the most significant development within the United Nations system for the protection of human rights since the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Communications and information were crucial elements in the protection of human rights and should not be neglected. He therefore urged the Centre for Human Rights to prepare a campaign to ensure the world was properly informed of the importance of the new post that had been created.

36. The tasks which the High Commissioner for Human Rights would be called on to perform were set out in General Assembly resolution 48/141. In addition to his general executive duties within the framework of the general standards of the United Nations, the High Commissioner had specific tasks relating to preventive measures and for rapid response by the system, covered in operative paragraph 4 (a), (f) and (g) of that resolution. Those provisions gave the High Commissioner considerable scope for action in dealing with threats to human rights in the context of impending crises both in proposing solutions to prevent situations from worsening and in seeking timely and appropriate action from the various political and executive bodies within the United Nations system.

37. Another aspect of the High Commissioner's mandate was the technical advisory and training services provided to Member States. Those tasks were set out in operative paragraph 4, sub-paragraphs (c), (d), (e), (h) and (i) of the above resolution and would enable the High Commissioner, through the Centre for Human Rights, to coordinate all activities relating to information training and technical assistance in the field of human rights. The prompt and effective provision of such services was crucial for countries in process of strengthening their legal systems. The establishment by the United Nations at the request of States of local offices to provide technical assistance and training tailored to the needs of the country concerned was a further possibility.

38. The support the High Commissioner would receive from non-governmental organizations would be crucial to his work and it was to be hoped that they would contribute fruitfully to it, especially in the case of the organizations whose efforts in their particular areas of competence had complemented those of the United Nations and helped to provide worldwide monitoring of human rights.

39. Mr. BURDEKIN (Australia), speaking on agenda item 11 (b), said that one of the most encouraging developments in the protection and promotion of human rights had been the recent rapid evolution of national institutions to provide accessible remedies to individuals whose rights had been violated. The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights had recognized that by adopting the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action, which acknowledged the importance of independent national institutions and also emphasized that States had an obligation to establish and maintain effective human rights machinery, that increased efforts should be made to assist countries which wished to establish or strengthen national institutions and that while it was the right of every State to choose the framework best suited to its national needs, particular regard should be paid to the "Principles relating to the status of national

institutions" which had been endorsed by the Commission at its forty-eighth session in resolution 1992/54 and welcomed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993.

40. The Australian Government and the Australian Human Rights Commission had for the past three years committed increasing resources to promoting the establishment and strengthening of independent national institutions. As Federal Human Rights Commissioner in Australia, he had been particularly encouraged by the growing awareness internationally, and in the Asia and Pacific region in particular, of the necessity for effective national human rights machinery. However, while the international machinery that had been evolved to monitor the most important human rights treaties was important, it was largely inaccessible to many of the most vulnerable and powerless individuals, since in many countries the courts, traditionally regarded as the guarantors of individual rights and liberties, were out of their reach. For example, 99 per cent of those who came to the Australian Commission for Human Rights for assistance could not afford to employ lawyers or to endure the long delays associated with juridical determinations. Court systems were frequently irrelevant when abuses of economic, social and cultural rights were in question.

41. For those and other reasons the Second International Workshop on National Institutions held in Tunis in December 1993 had unanimously decided to request the United Nations to give appropriate recognition to the role such institutions played in implementing United Nations human rights standards by according them appropriate status to enable them to participate in meetings of United Nations human rights bodies in the same way as Governments, intergovernmental organizations and accredited non-governmental organizations. That would also be in line with the procedures whereby national human rights institutions were enabled to participate in the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights.

42. Regional arrangements, where they existed, complemented United Nations machinery and national institutions and offered valuable opportunities for sharing national experience. The Asia-Pacific region was the only region lacking such a body. However, the increase in national human rights institutions in the region and the growing cooperation among them were perhaps a precursor to the establishment of regional or subregional organizations. In working towards that goal, Australia had consistently been a sponsor of General Assembly and Commission resolutions promoting such regional arrangements in the Asian and Pacific region and looked forward to further cooperation to that end. Australia had, at the World Conference on Human Rights contributed A$300 thousand to the Voluntary Fund for Technical Assistance, to assist in the creation and strengthening of national institutions.

43. Turning to agenda item 11 (a), with respect to women's rights, he fully endorsed the proposal that the Commission should establish a special rapporteur on violence against women as a follow-up to the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. That would not only give tangible expression to the Commission's commitment to implement effective measures but would also recognise that violence against women was both a violation of human rights and a matter for

international action. Furthermore, it would assist in realizing the objective of having women's rights receive due attention from human rights bodies. The Australian Government had made a major commitment to the elimination of violence against women at national level, including consideration by Federal, State and Territory governments of a national strategy on violence against women.

44. Australia believed it essential for the rights of all vulnerable groups in society to be recognized and protected. One area of discrimination yet to be accorded effective attention with the United Nations system was sexual orientation. Discussion of such issues was bound to be difficult given the diversity of political, cultural and religious traditions represented in the international community; nevertheless action from a human rights perspective to proscribe discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation was long overdue. Australia had enacted legislation that recognized sexual preference as a ground of discrimination in employment, for the purpose of inquiry and conciliation by the national Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

45. Australia was also concerned about the plight of those discriminated against because of their HIV status, not only because of the need to protect the human rights of individuals with HIV/AIDS but also because discrimination against those affected was counterproductive in preventing the spread of the pandemic. Australia had released the second stage of the national HIV/AIDS strategy, which sought both to ensure that such discrimination was eliminated and to continue the "partnership" approach to HIV/AIDS which had helped Australia to provide effective prevention and education as well as high quality health care.

46. In conclusion, with reference to agenda item 11 (c), he said that he shared the views of previous speakers on the importance of the work of the Centre for Human Rights. He looked forward in particular to the publication of the manual on national institutions which would be extremely useful to countries endeavouring to create effective and independent national institutions or to strengthen those already in existence.

47. Ms. MALUWA (Malawi), speaking on agenda item 19, said that as the report of the Secretary-General on advisory services in the field of human rights (E/CN.4/1994/78) indicated, Malawi had been one of the beneficiaries of the expertise and technical assistance provided by that programme, in particular with relation to the referendum held in June 1993. The Centre for Human Rights had contributed in no small measure to the reforms that had taken place in Malawi and most of the proposals made in the Needs Assessment Report had been or were being implemented. Malawi looked forward to cooperation with other Governments, the Centre for Human Rights, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of other programmes, in particular those that would be needed after the general elections scheduled for May 1994.

48. Malawi envisaged the establishment in the very near future of a national human rights commission and/or the office of an ombudsman. It also hoped to provide technical assistance to local human rights bodies and training for personnel in the civil service and the administration of justice and to engage in law reform. If those programmes were to be achieved, technical and

financial assistance would be required from the Centre for Human Rights and the international community at large. Pursuant to the recommendations in the Needs Assessment Report, other specific areas for reform had been earmarked and a more comprehensive programme of activities would be submitted in due course.

49. Since training and education were important means of promoting respect for human rights, Malawi greatly appreciated the fellowships and internships offered by the Centre for Human Rights and hoped that the lack of funds for such purposes would soon be remedied. It was also important that training should be directed to vulnerable groups such as women and children. Malawi therefore welcomed the targeting of women in training programmes offered by the Centre for Human Rights. It was hoped, however, that other training programmes in addition to development of curricula for primary and secondary schools could be provided, such as mini-summits at the regional level where children, the leaders of the future, would be afforded an opportunity of exchanging ideas on human rights and fundamental freedoms.

50. Malawi welcomed the new orientation in the working methods of the programme of advisory service, which would strengthen development, democracy and human rights, and urged the Centre for Human Rights to strengthen its involvement in full partnership with all States and international organizations as well as non-governmental organizations. The full range of activities outlined in the report could, however, only be meaningfully implemented by increasing the human and other resources available to the Centre for Human Rights; she called on the international community to address that issue as soon as possible.

51. Mr. HEBIBAS (Albania), speaking on agenda item 19, recalled that the Commission had at its previous two sessions welcomed and encouraged the positive steps being taken by Albania towards democracy and respect for human rights. Albania had continued to make progress and had created conditions conducive to a further improvement in the situation of human rights.

52. In the field of legislation, the aim of the Albanian Government had been to enact provisions that were in line with international human rights standards. The most important realization had been the adoption by the Albanian Parliament of the Albanian Charter of Human Rights, which had been prepared with the assistance of international experts and organizations. The Bill together with the Law on Principal Constitutional Provisions had laid the necessary legal foundation for safeguarding human rights and fundamental freedoms in Albania.

53. Considerable efforts had also been made to improve the provisions of the Penal Code, with a view to making it more democratic and humane and provide sound safeguards for a person's rights in legal proceedings - in particular, by means of the provisions concerning legal aid and release on remand.

54. Fuller details of the legislative measures adopted during 1993 relating to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights appeared in the Secretary-General's report presented pursuant to Commission resolution 1993/65 (E/CN.4/1994/75). Those measures had helped to improve a number of human rights in Albania; in particular, they had helped to promote socio-political

pluralism through freedom of activity for a number of political parties and non-governmental organizations. The further democratization of social and political life had also promoted the traditional tolerance and understanding among various social groups, minorities and religious communities, thus enhancing respect for human rights.

55. At a practical level, efforts had been made in areas such as education and information about human rights. The organizing of seminars and training courses, and more radio and television programmes about human rights, had helped to spread awareness of them. Albania had benefited, in that regard, from the advisory services and technical assistance provided in close cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights, the Council of Europe, and other international non-governmental organizations.

56. In conclusion, he stressed the importance of advisory services in the field of human rights. Albania's experience of fruitful cooperation with the bodies which provided such services clearly illustrated their usefulness and pointed to the need to provide adequate resources for those bodies, particularly the Centre for Human Rights, and thus improve their capacity to go on providing cooperation programmes in that sphere.

57. Mr. GUPTA (India) said that terrorism had become a pervasive and organized threat to human rights in their widest form, and must be seriously addressed under two broad aspects: the danger it posed to the State, society and human rights; and its use as a means to strike at the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other nations for political objectives. There was also terrorism's links with narcotics and religious extremism. The climate of violence and fear it engendered posed a threat to the psyche of all societies and to the structures and response mechanisms of States themselves.

58. India had, particularly during the past decade, faced the onslaught of terrorism on a massive scale and in all forms. It had first appeared in the wake of left-wing extremism in some parts of the country, in the name of deprivation and neglect by society and the State, and had more recently taken the form of violent ethnic and sub-ethnic conflicts. Unfortunately, the international community had contributed, wittingly or unwittingly, to the process by silence, and terrorism had apparently gained some acceptance, and even respectability, by being described as "insurgency", "freedom struggles", and so on. From that stage it was but a step to making available the means to wage violence - the development of arms smuggling and the link with narcotics traffic, as well as the large-scale use of weaponry and tactics prohibited in national and international law and practice. With regard to the phenomenon of so-called narco-terrorism, there were examples in India and elsewhere in the world of an exponential growth in heroin addiction which, if not checked, would increasingly threaten many societies.

59. Terrorism as seen in India was also a direct attempt, through large-scale attacks on politicians, the judiciary, the press and government officials, to destroy the democratic institutions which alone protected civil society and human rights. Should those institutions be destroyed, the law of the jungle would replace the rule of law, propaganda and disinformation would replace legitimate expression through representative institutions and the media, and grievance redress would depend on the whims of a dictatorship. Attacks had

been made not only on members of the police and security forces, and on their families in many cases, but also indiscriminately on innocent civilians; thousands of men, women and children had been killed and maimed. Bomb blasts in trains and elsewhere in recent years exemplified the indiscriminate use of explosives obtainable through sponsorship of terrorism.

60. Terrorism was also being used to foster social and religious conflicts. Recent events in Jammu and Kashmir reflected efforts to change the very demographic profile of one part of the State, resulting in brutal attacks on the minority community and incitement on religious grounds which was threatening the provision of modern, secular education to hundreds of thousands of children.

61. Unfortunately, current law, as understood and applied, left much to be desired and could even be perceived as providing legitimacy to the perpetrators of terrorism around the world. In that connection, his delegation appreciated the statement made by the representative of Turkey, earlier in the current session, on certain fundamental issues requiring urgent consideration by the Commission and the world community as a whole.

62. To mention but one aspect, in India over 100 groups were currently engaged in spreading violence and terrorism; but in any discussion they were described in terms such as "armed opposition groups" or "the political opposition", and situations were described as "internal armed conflict", as if such groups were legitimate combatants authorized to use force, whereas in fact they were bound by no rules, generally adopted outlawed methods, and chose targets which should be immune under national and international law. When such "armed opposition groups" were virtually equated with the State, the latter's difficulty in meeting its responsibilities was aggravated because, while it could be held accountable and questioned, the opposing forces could not. And a new dimension had been added on account of the support for terrorism from beyond international borders. As noted in comments quoted by the representative of Turkey in the statement referred to earlier, civil wars were no longer mere conflicts between domestic forces within a State but had become limited wars between outside Powers; and, since the underlying practice and political policy were endemic, it was futile for the law to insist on branding it as illegal.

63. The question was whether the international community would remain a mute spectator, while human rights slogans and forums were being used to cover terrorism and its sponsorship. The Vienna Declaration, it should be recalled, condemned all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy; it urged the international community to take necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism. Prompt action must be taken before it was too late.

64. Mr. NASSERI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Ministers representing Asian States, meeting at Bangkok in March 1993 in the context of preparations for the World Conference on Human Rights, had decided inter alia that, while human rights were universal in nature, they must be considered in the context of a dynamic, evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various

historical, cultural and religious backgrounds. And in November 1992, Ministers representing African States, meeting at Tunis, had stressed the existence of difficulties, endogenous and exogenous, which impeded satisfactory implementation of human rights at the universal level. A number of Western countries had viewed the Asian and African positions as a formidable challenge, and the question had arisen whether the concept of universality of human rights instruments, as understood by the West, would survive the World Conference. At the latter, however, a compromise formula had been arrived at, reflected in paragraph 5 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Asia and Africa thereby understood, from that important agreed text, that historical cultural and religious backgrounds could no longer be disregarded in interpreting existing human rights instruments and setting new ones, while general commitments to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms remained unaffected. Such a significant development, if applied properly, could lead to true universality.

65. It would be unfair to conclude that the 63 countries which had not signed and ratified either or both of the International Covenants wished to violate human rights; their decision stemmed, in most cases, from reasons based on their historical, cultural and, for the most part, religious backgrounds; in fact, 17 Islamic countries had refrained from signing and ratifying the major international human rights instruments. In many prominent Islamic countries, any substantial departure from Islamic law was tantamount to a betrayal of their religion, the most sacred part of their identity. It was simply not enough to tell them that, in the field of human rights, international instruments stood above domestic law and that the latter should be aligned with the former. It was noticeable that a number of those Islamic countries, whose political stability was vital to the West, were not even persuaded to accede to the instruments, since to do so might adversely affect their social fabric.

66. The Islamic world claimed to have pioneered the promotion of human rights, in an age when such rights did not exist elsewhere. In the tenth century, for example, Cordoba, in Islamic Spain, had been by far the most civilized city in Europe; and Islam had preserved and evolved Roman and Greek civilizations. At the same time, the Islamic world questioned the origin and essence of international human rights instruments - in particular, why they made no mention of God. Even on a democratic basis, at least 80 per cent of the world's peoples believed in God in some form; nearly all of them shared the view that absolute justice came only from God, from responsibility to whom men's rights and responsibilities towards each other derived. In practical terms, they pointed to the decadence, shallowness and the sacrifice of morality to secularism in the West; disenchantment with surface values was a particularly powerful reason for Islamic revivalism in modern times.

67. The opposing arguments, in support of international instruments, were sufficiently well known. It was held that, in order to make them internationally accepted, they represented only a compromise reflecting common denominators. It was clear, nevertheless, that their texts had been influenced by the ideas reflected in Rousseau's Social Contract, based on humanism.

68. The only realistic way forward, therefore, was through genuine dialogue and flexibility of approach, enabling the two sides to feel that dialogue no longer constituted a threat to their respective positions but a means to new and higher understandings, and eschewing the paranoia, voiced prior to the Vienna Conference, about threats to universality. In that regard, Europe was in no position to reject Asia's regard for historical, cultural and religious backgrounds, since the latter certainly superseded the "local requirements" which, according to the European Convention on Human Rights, should be taken into account, for territories under European control, in the implementation of human rights. While the dialogue continued, existing international human rights instruments, more flexibly interpreted, could serve as a modus operandi.

69. With reference to Commission resolution 1993/94, on documentation and appointments, he pointed out that the guidelines on the volume of reports had not been complied with in 11 reports hitherto, and that the timing for distribution of reports had been neglected in 14 cases. As for appointments, the distribution in the previous year had been one for Africa, two for Asia, two for eastern Europe, five for western Europe and others and seven for Latin America. The current distribution included three from Africa, three from Asia, two from eastern Europe, six from Latin America and six from western Europe and others - a slight improvement but a far from desirable situation. The Commission, therefore, must remain seized of the matter.

70. Mr. GODOY (Cuba) said that the Commission's current session - the first since the World Conference on Human Rights - showed no sign of a change towards cooperation in considering human rights issues or an improved basis for the Organization's future work in that sphere - a disappointing outcome for those who had placed their hopes on the World Conference. That session, like the preceding ones, remained in the hands of a group of countries which disregarded the real needs of the world's deprived peoples and evinced no will to seek a better world at the end of the twentieth century, but rather sought to impose their own standards and interests on the rest of world society. That group had seemingly arrogated to itself the right to judge the countries of the South, ignoring real problems, arbitrarily voicing some rights and ignoring others, and seeking to impose mechanisms which would further erode such fundamental rights as sovereignty and self-determination.

71. It had been hoped that the countries in question might begin to show fairness and responsibility in looking at the alarming violations of human rights, including the resurgence of racist, xenophobic and neo-Fascist tendencies in Europe and the imperial north of the Americas. And it had been hoped that human rights issues would no longer be used for political, individual or ideological motives.

72. Perhaps the most monstrous violation of human rights was their political manipulation. In the name of human rights, attempts were made to distort the mandates of United Nations bodies and establish new procedures and mechanisms to make the Security Council a world policeman on behalf of the aims and interests of a super-Power and its allies. Efforts were being made to replace genuine dialogue and cooperation by the imposition of rules of a supposed new world order, while continuing to deny to the peoples of the South the fundamental human rights, including the right to development, that they had

lacked under the unjust old order. But those countries would not allow the defence of human rights to be distorted into a pretext for having their sovereignty and right to self-determination restricted for the benefit of certain Powers.

73. There should be regard for what mankind could really achieve if the current climate of confrontation and hegemonistic claims by some industrialized countries was replaced by cooperation based on respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the historical, cultural and religious characteristics of each nation. Human rights issues should be deliberated not in an atmosphere of censure on the part of some countries against others but in a spirit of genuine commitment, by the world community in general and each State in particular, to protecting the human person, not particular economic interests, systems or ideologies.

74. It would be unpardonable to remain idle in the face of all the current human tragedies, typified inter alia by war, xenophobia, neo-fascism and racism, the worsening situation of women and children, growing unemployment, environmental damage and the cultural decline of indigenous populations. His own country was well aware of the universal values which inspired mankind, having suffered for many years from having its post-colonial development, and the full enjoyment of human rights by all its people, hampered as a result of the continued criminal blockade which had been unilaterally and arbitrarily imposed for over 30 years, since the early days of the Cuban revolution, by the United States, a super-Power which sought to govern the destiny of a people while trampling on the human rights of thousands of women, children, the elderly and infirm of its own nation. Surely it was high time, especially since the cold war was over, for the international community to take a firm step in calling on the United States of America to put an end to such unilateral coercive measures, which violated the basic right of any nation to survival.

75. Mr. TORELLA DI ROMAGNANO (Italy) said that his delegation fully endorsed the statement made by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union, at the 45th meeting, on agenda item 19. The technical cooperation programme, which Italy supported, had become an essential pillar of United Nations action in the field of human rights, and helped to promote a spirit of cooperation and dialogue with Member States that could not but contribute to the prevention of human rights violations and an ever wider implementation of international human rights standards. At the World Conference on Human Rights, there had been broad consensus on that part of the human rights programme, reflected in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Italy would do its best to build on that consensus; it believed in the Programme's effectiveness, and attached the greatest importance to action by the Centre to establish national infrastructures for the promotion and protection of human rights. Italy was proud to associate itself with such United Nations efforts and was one of the largest contributors to the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights, having made available over US$ 1 million over the past two years for the Centre's activities. His delegation encouraged the Centre to continue its efforts to enhance transparency, streamline internal procedures and improve the overall effectiveness of its technical cooperation programmes.

76. His delegation welcomed recent appointments to the Centre, which would put the programme in line with the growing demands of the international community. The appointment of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was also to be welcomed, since that would facilitate effective coordination between the Centre, other United Nations bodies, regional and national institutions and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of technical cooperation projects in the field of human rights.

77. Electronically accessible human rights data played a critical role in both protecting and promoting human rights. He therefore informed the Commission of Italy's initiative and support for a new programme to computerize regional and national human rights institutions in Africa, particularly the Organization of African Unity Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul.

78. His Government was positively considering the appeal of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights concerning the recent opening of the United Nations Human Rights Office in Cambodia. The challenge of supporting a newly emerging democracy deserved financial backing. Italy was also finalizing an agreement with the Centre on action to train military government officials - starting with some Latin American and African countries - in the twin questions of humanitarian law and human rights. It was also to take an initiative to finance a series of courses on human rights in peace-keeping and peacemaking at the International Labour Organisation/United Nations Training Centre in Turin for military staff involved in peace-keeping operations. In short, Italy was doing her fair share in supporting the programme of technical cooperation in the field of human rights.

79. Mr. FLORIAN (Peru), expressing his appreciation of the report on internally displaced persons (E/CN.4/1994), which was all the more admirable for having been carried out on a small budget, noted that, as the report stated, what was at issue was not mere statistics, but real human beings who were at that moment suffering as a result of having to leave their homes and ways of life. His own country had experience of the phenomenon: the terror had resulted in three separate waves of internally displaced persons, amounting to over half a million people.

80. The author of the report, Mr. Deng, had also pointed out the complex factors preventing national authorities from dealing with the problem, with the result that protection and humanitarian assistance for displaced persons had to be sought elsewhere. The Peruvian Government had been among the first to stress that the international community should show its solidarity with the most vulnerable groups of society by providing practical help. The experience of the various United Nations bodies should be placed immediately at the service of internally displaced persons, in order to work out projects which could lead to lasting solutions. In that connection his Government urgently appealed to the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for immediate discussions on the establishment of multi-agency cooperation bases to serve until the United Nations system had decided what permanent legal and political measures it should take concerning internally displaced persons.

81. In view of the urgency of the matter, his Government had set up a technical commission in 1992 to examine the problem. In conjunction with the Government's efforts to achieve peace in the country, the commission would contribute to the country's development. In that connection, he informed the Commission that his Government had issued an invitation to the Representative of the Secretary-General to visit Peru, so that he could see the situation for himself and discuss an urgent plan of action with the Government.

82. Lastly, in relation to agenda item 11 (b), he was glad to announce the re-establishment of the Peruvian National Council for Human Rights.

83. Mr. RUAI (Sudan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the allegations made earlier by Christian Democrat International repeated the disinformation disseminated by opposition groups residing in some foreign capitals and by some non-governmental organizations and missionary groups which were frustrated because the former "closed regions" in Sudan, especially in the south, had been thrown open to free competition between various missionary groups, including those propagating the Islamic faith. He pointed out that the massive movement of population from the south as a result of the conflict between government forces and the rebel movement had been in the direction of the north and not that of neighbouring countries. If the people of the south had been afraid of persecution and retribution, they would have taken refuge in neighbouring countries, as many had in the 1960s and 1970s; yet they had moved to the north.

84. Sudan was and would continue to be a land populated by a multiplicity of races, cultures and religions. It had a long tradition of tolerance. The visit of Pope John Paul II to the Sudan had identified the conflict in the country as political rather than religious and his call for peace and religious dialogue had been heeded by the Government of Sudan. There had been a recent visit by a delegation from the World Council of Churches; and the recommendations of the Conference on Religions, held in Khartoum in April 1993, were being gradually implemented. Foremost among them was the establishment of the Muslim-Christian Forum, where the two communities could voice their grievances and discuss and resolve issues. Another step forward was the recommendation to abolish the Missionary Act of 1962, in response to a request made by the Pope. The Government was ready to cooperate with any group and in any serious initiative to resume the dialogue in order to resolve the conflict peacefully. His delegation hoped that non-governmental organizations would desist from inflammatory statements or calls for foreign intervention, thus allowing the current initiatives to run their course and bring about the desired peaceful settlement in Sudan.

85. Mrs. MARKUS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, contrary to what had been asserted, women in her country enjoyed equality with men. Under Shariah Law, God had conferred special blessings on women, giving them the status of mother, sister or wife; materially, there was no difference between the rights of men and women. Islamic law gave women the right to dispose of their own property, the right of custody in cases of divorce and, if a divorced mother died, it was her mother who took over custody of the children. The mother had priority over the father in other ways, too; the fact that the Prophet had said three times

that he loved his mother most showed that in Islam the mother held a privileged position. She could inculcate the ideals of tolerance and love towards all, without distinction, in accordance with the teaching of Islamic law.

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES, INCLUDING:

(a) QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CYPRUS (agenda item 12) (E/CN.4/1994/3-6, 7 and Corr.1 and Add.1-2, 8, 46-61, 97, 102-104, 110, 115 and 119; E/CN;4/1994/NGO/7, 9, 12-15, 22-24, 26, 28, 29, 37, 40, 42 and 43; A/48/526 and Add.1, 561, 562, 578, 584, 600 and Add.1 and 601).

86. Mr. FASEHUN (Nigeria) said that since 1964 the political and military situation in the Republic of Cyprus had violated the fundamental human rights of many of its inhabitants. The Secretary-General's most recent report on the situation (S/26777) had revealed that many families were still separated and that cases of missing persons had been submitted by both the Greek and the Turkish Cypriots. The forcible division of the island was the factor that had caused most of the human rights violations that had taken place.

87. Applauding the Secretary-General's efforts to achieve a peaceful and lasting solution to the problem, he said that the set of ideas and the package of confidence-building measures put forward by the Secretary-General contained useful proposals, which his delegation urged both sides to implement. The international community was not happy with the stalemate in Cyprus and its renewed interest in the matter was underlined by the appointment of a European Union observer. The mediation of the international community could, however, meet with success only if the two communities compromised and worked more effectively to promote tolerance and reconciliation.

88. Ms. EL KHAZEN (Lebanon) said that her country still suffered from occupation by Israel, which continued to control a large area of South Lebanon, in defiance of General Assembly and Commission resolutions. Lebanon believed in the sanctity of human rights, yet it saw those rights violated daily by Israel on Lebanese territory. In July 1993, Israel had launched a large military operation on South Lebanon and the West Bekaa, causing hundreds of innocent casualties, displacing thousands of inhabitants and destroying their houses, schools, hospitals, places of worship and public institutions. South Lebanon was still subjected to random shelling by heavy artillery and aircraft almost daily.

89. Israel had for several years held more than 200 Lebanese in the detention centres of Khiam and Marjeyoun, preventing the International Committee of the Red Cross from visiting them. Lebanese and other detainees in Israeli prisons and detention centres should be released immediately, in response to the appeals of the international community and in accordance with international law, resolutions and practices, particularly in view of the fact that peace negotiations were in progress which called for confidence-building measures.

90. Israel could not justify its shocking practices and violations of human rights on the grounds of self-defence, or its retaliation on the operations launched by the resistance, for they were the natural consequence of the occupation and the despair it generated. Moreover, such operations were limited and did not match the ferocity of Israeli attacks.

91. Lebanon's message was one of peace and stability. It therefore called on the international community to live up to its responsibilities and to insist on the unconditional withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon.

92. Lastly, she expressed her country's thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross for its efforts to alleviate the suffering of the population and to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for her assistance during the massive exodus that had followed the Israeli aggression on South Lebanon in July 1993. She also wished to express Lebanon's appreciation of the UNIFIL forces in South Lebanon and of all the countries who contributed to those forces, whether financially or in human personnel.

The meeting rose at 10 p.m.